

CLASSIFICATION

SECRET
SECURITY INFORMATION

INFORMATION REPORT

REPORT NO.

25X1A

CD NO.:

COUNTRY USSR (Lithuanian SSR)

DATE DISTR. 31 July 1952

SUBJECT The City of Vilnius

NO. OF PAGES : 6

25X1C

NO. OF ENCLS.
(LISTED BELOW)

SUPPLEMENT TO
REPORT NO.

25X1X

REFERENCE COPY
DO NOT CIRCULATE

Appearance of City

1. There are two distinct parts to the city of Vilnius, capital of the Lithuanian SSR. The old section has narrow winding streets mostly paved with red brick-like stones and laid out without a plan. The houses here are of old style, not more than three stories high and most have courtyard entrances. Within the doorways there are blackboards listing the names of residents. Each house has a house guard who is responsible to the house administrator.
2. The new section of the city consists mainly of the two principal suburbs Zverynas and Antakalnis. Both are laid out according to plan with straight streets, mostly of cobblestone, and street lights (50-watt bulbs) every hundred meters. Houses in this section are three and four stories high and are numbered with odd numbers on the right side as one walks toward the higher numbers. Street names are found at all intersections.
3. Gedemino Street is the main street in Vilnius. It is wide, asphalted, well-lighted, has trees along both sides, and carries heavy traffic from 8 a.m. to midnight. Among the government offices located on Gedemino Street are the following:
 - a. USSR Central Committee building, housing republic and local offices of the Communist Party. This building, which is located at 32 Gedemino, is a three-story building of reinforced concrete with three large columns supporting the roof. The windows are approximately three meters high and three meters wide.
 - b. USSR Supreme Soviet.

CLASSIFICATION

SECRET

[illegible]

SECRET

25X1A

-2-

- c. LSSR Soviet of Ministers
 - d. LSSR Ministry of the Fishing Industry
 - e. LSSR Foreign Affairs Ministry
 - f. LSSR Ministry of State Security (MGB)
 - g. Republic, oblast, and city offices of the military prosecutor (sic)
 - h. Administrative offices controlling the sale of food products and consumer goods in Vilnius
 - i. Vilnius Executive Committee and the most important city administrative offices at 33 Gedemino Street
4. Vilnius is divided into several city rayons (rayoni), including Lenin Rayon, Dzerzhinsk Rayon, and Stalin Rayon. In matters involving housing, repairs, and the registration of births, deaths, and marriages, the average citizen deals mostly with Executive Committee branch offices located in these rayoni. Persons sometimes deal with the militia office where they are registered. Besides those offices already listed as being on Gedemino Street, other administrative offices in Vilnius include the city militia administration and the OMKhs [anti-black market unit] which are located on Mindaugo Street, the LSSR Military Commissariat on Totoriu Street, the Ministry of Meat and Milk Production on Traku Street, and the LSSR Ministry of the Interior (MVD) on Radvilaite Street.
5. Locations of some important buildings in Vilnius include the following:
- a. Vilnius department store (Vilniaus Miesto Universalinis Magazinas) on the corner of Gedemino and Luido Giros Streets. This is a four-story concrete building where everything from buttons, face powder, and children's toys to suits, radios, and motorcycles is sold.
 - b. Hotel Vilnius, the main hotel in the city, at 22 Gedemino Street. This is a four-story building marked by a large sign. Single and double rooms with closets, telephones, and radio loudspeakers are available at 25 and 50 rubles per night, respectively. This is a first class hotel; it has a restaurant, and the staircases are covered with carpets.
 - c. Hotel Bristol, also located on Gedemino Street.
 - d. Lithuanian drama and opera theater on Basanaviciaus Street. This concrete building is fronted by a stairway and four large columns. The theater has a large balcony.
 - e. Russian drama theater on the corner of Luido Giros and Gedemino Streets.
 - f. Vilnius Officers' Club at Kutuzov Place (formerly Napoleon Place). This is a large four-story building whose yard is a beautiful park. The structure is light yellow in color with broad cement steps and columns. Inside are a hotel, restaurant, dancing and concert halls.
 - g. Vilnius State Philharmonic at 5 Ausros-Vartu Street.
 - h. "Moskva" movie theater on Didzioji Street.
 - i. Vilnius Art Museum, also on Didzioji Street.
 - j. Vilnius prison (the infamous Lukiskis Prison) near Lukiskio Place.

SECRET

SECRET

-3-

6. Besides Gedemino Street, other important streets in Vilnius are the following:

- a. Komjaunimo Street (formerly Pylimo Street)
- b. Didzioji Street
- c. Kalvariju Street
- d. Luido Giros Street
- e. Basanaviciaus Street
- f. Mindaugo Street

All are paved with either cobblestones or brick-like stones, are well lighted, and always carry heavy traffic.

7. The main monument in Vilnius is at the end of Gedemino Street on Dedeminas Hill. Here are located the ruins of a castle, the historic residence of the former Lithuanian Grand Dukes. The Chernyakovskiy Monument is located in a park on Gedemino Street and was built in 1945 to honor the late Bolshevik general, Chernyakovskiy.
8. During the war the most seriously damaged part of the city was the area of the Jewish Ghetto, from Voliecu Street to Luido Giros Street, along Gedemino Street as far as Totoriu Street, and turning into Didzioji and Subaciaus Streets as far as the railway freight station. Reconstruction work was done only on partly damaged homes; ruins of completely destroyed houses were not even removed.

Population

9. There are more than 120,000 inhabitants in Vilnius. The majority of them are Lithuanians, Russians, and Jews. Minority groups include Poles, Belorussians, and Georgians. The population of the city greatly increased after 1945 for the following reasons:
- a. Nearly all Poles were repatriated to Poland and persons all over Lithuania were mobilized to come to Vilnius to fill their places. Most persons came with their families.
 - b. Most Lithuanian Jews who survived the German occupation moved to Vilnius and invited their relatives from the USSR to live there too.
 - c. All (sic) Soviet soldiers and officers demobilized in Vilnius remained there and had their families and relatives join them.

The result is a critical housing shortage in Vilnius.

Controls

10. The Vilnius militia has five sections or sub-offices. Each one is responsible for the rayon which it patrols and in which it makes various checks. Each rayon is divided according to streets and each street is the responsibility of one militia officer and a certain number of militiamen. Therefore, all streets are equally guarded, with the exception of Gedemino, Luido Giros, Didzioji, Komjaunimo, Kalvariju, Radvilaites, and Mindaugo, where there is always heavy traffic and where the central MGB, MVD, and other offices are located. At night, these streets plus Totoriu, Pilies, Traku, Vokietiu, Basanaviciaus, Dominikonu, Geliu, and Arkliu streets have, in addition to foot patrols, mounted militiamen who travel in platoons of five men each. Traffic almost completely stops at 1 a.m., though there are no militia-imposed traffic limitations at this hour.

SECRET

SECRET

25X1A

-4-

Military Units

11. The 16th Division is garrisoned on Kalvariju Street in Vilnius. There are, in addition, quite a number of MVD units in town.

Rail and Water Transportation

12. The Vilnius railway station is at the end of Geliu Street and was being reconstructed in 1947. The area around the station is surrounded by a wooden fence and guarded by railway employees and members of the railway police. All tracks leading from Vilnius are standard broad-gauge tracks.
13. Vilnius has a rather small harbor. Passenger steamships of approximately 60 tons go up to Berkiai. There is no control on buying tickets, since the traffic moves via inland waterways. There are guard installations at the harbor.

Electricity

14. The electric current at Vilnius is normally 220 volts and there is no dimming or sudden surging of power. Inhabitants of Vilnius are forbidden to use electric stoves or refrigerators. Use of electric current for light or for operating radio sets is not forbidden, provided consumption does not exceed the allowed amount. Using more than the quota makes one liable to a fine corresponding to the amount of the excess. Bulbs used burn quite long and their quality seems to be good. Bulbs sold are of two sorts, 110 volts and 220 volts, though only 220-volt bulbs are used in Vilnius.

Trade

15. There are two main market places in Vilnius. One is "Hale", situated not far from the railway station; the other is "Kalvariju Turgus", on the opposite side of town at the end of Kalvariju Street. Farmers bring such products as berries, mushrooms, potatoes, butter, cheese, milk, onions, tomatoes, bacon, meat, and small live pigs to market. Farmers living nearby who have little to carry come on foot; others come by horsewagon or other means of transportation.
16. Market operations usually start at 8 a.m. At 5:30 p.m. a whistle is blown by the militia as a warning to finish trading. Immediately, the militia starts driving farmers and customers from the square. Those farmers who can leave their horses and wagons with friends do so and are free then to do what they like after 5:30 p.m. The farmers usually eat and drink at the numerous small inns, teahouses, and beer cafes around the market place. There is no fixed time for the farmers to leave town after the marketing hours are over.
17. There is no restriction whatever on goods in the shops of Vilnius. It is, however, difficult to get sugar, flour, good material for clothing, or a good suit. Most black marketeering involves material for clothing, women's skirts, and good blankets. The Vilnius militia, like all other area militias, have special OBKhS sections to fight black marketeering. OBKhS lieutenants in civilian clothes visit markets; and, whenever they run across something wrong, they arrest the person concerned on the spot, confiscate the goods, and deliver them to the city Finance Section. This section determines their value and sells the goods to the consumer organization, which in turn sells them to the consumers. The money obtained is paid into the Finance Section's current account at the State Bank.

Newspapers and Radios

18. The following daily newspapers are edited in Vilnius: Tiesa (Truth), published in Lithuanian and selling for 20 kopeks, and Sovetskaya Litva

SECRET

SECRET

25X1A

-5-

(Soviet Lithuania), published in Russian. Magazines are Jaunimo Gretos (Rows of Youth), Pergale (Victory), Komunistas (The Communist), Agitatoriaus Bolknotas (Notebook of the Agitator), Mokslas ir Kultura (Science and Culture). Other newspapers in Vilnius are Mokslas ir Menas (Science and Art), Komjaunimo Tiesa (Komsomol Truth), Lietuvos Pionierius (The Lithuanian Pioneer), and Valstieciu Laikraštis (Peasant Newspaper).

19. Radio programs can be listened to by all who have radio sets. Local transmitters are operating. Approximately 45 percent of all radio sets are capable of receiving foreign stations. Although there is no official prohibition against listening to foreign stations, it is dangerous to do so, since, if such activity were reported, it could serve as a basis for proof of counter-revolutionary activities and result in a long prison term. Most radio sets are Soviet make. Of foreign brands, Ferenti and Philips sets dominate.
20. The people have good judgment as to what is truth and what is propaganda in the press and on the radio. All news from abroad is eagerly noted and the development of international affairs is very carefully watched.

Employment

21. Each ministry has a special so-called Planning Section (Planu Skyrinis) which fixes working norms and salaries and confirms the number of job openings for all subsections of the ministry. The whole list is submitted to the republic Plan Commission which must confirm the norms, number of openings, and salaries. If no alterations are made, the ministry receives back the confirmed plan and can deliver it to the various subsections.
22. Neither the director of a concern nor the personnel section chief is authorized to exceed the number of employees allotted by the ministry to his office or concern. If this number is exceeded and if this violation comes to the attention of the finance section (which is authorized to make revisions), the excess of state funds spent in paying unauthorized employees is counted as having been embezzled and the official is liable to court action.
23. The salary of an employee depends upon the position held and the ministry to which his office belongs. It is almost impossible for the average employee or worker to make a living on his salary.

Housing

24. The best houses in Vilnius are occupied by MGB and MVD employees, high Party officials, government and military personnel. Most of these persons live on Uzupio Street. Because Vilnius is overcrowded, average employees and workers live in very humble rooms containing little space. Single workers and those without families have quarters in factory dormitories until they find a room, which they take even if it is very distant from their place of work.
25. In the first class hotels such as the Vilnius and the Bristol, rooms can be obtained without any difficulty because everything is expensive and there is a constant lack of guests.

Communications

26. Dial telephones are installed in Vilnius. Inhabitants usually use public telephones, since private phones are found only in homes of high officials or in offices. To telephone from a dial pay station, one needs a 15 kopek piece. When the number is dialed, the party which answers will be heard softly at first. Then the 15 kopek piece is inserted and the party can be heard in full voice. If the number does not answer, any inserted coin is automatically returned. Source has not heard of local calls being tapped.

SECRET

SECRET

25X1A

-6-

27. Telegrams are sent from the telegraph office, where the text is filled in on a blank form. The fee depends upon the number of words. No one asks for the sender's personal documents. Source knows of no special censorship of mail of the average civilian. Letters of people under suspicion are, however, controlled by MGB officials.

Medical Facilities

28. The Ministry of Health is located in Vilnius. There are about ten polyclinics, a tuberculosis sanatorium, a clinic for eye diseases, and a number of general hospitals in the city. Private medical assistance is free for every citizen. Doctors and professors can receive private patients at the hospitals or polyclinics after working hours. Any citizen can be hospitalized if there is space available.
29. In case of illness, one must go to the city polyclinic registration office and show his passport. He is then sent to the respective specialist, where he awaits his turn.

SECRET